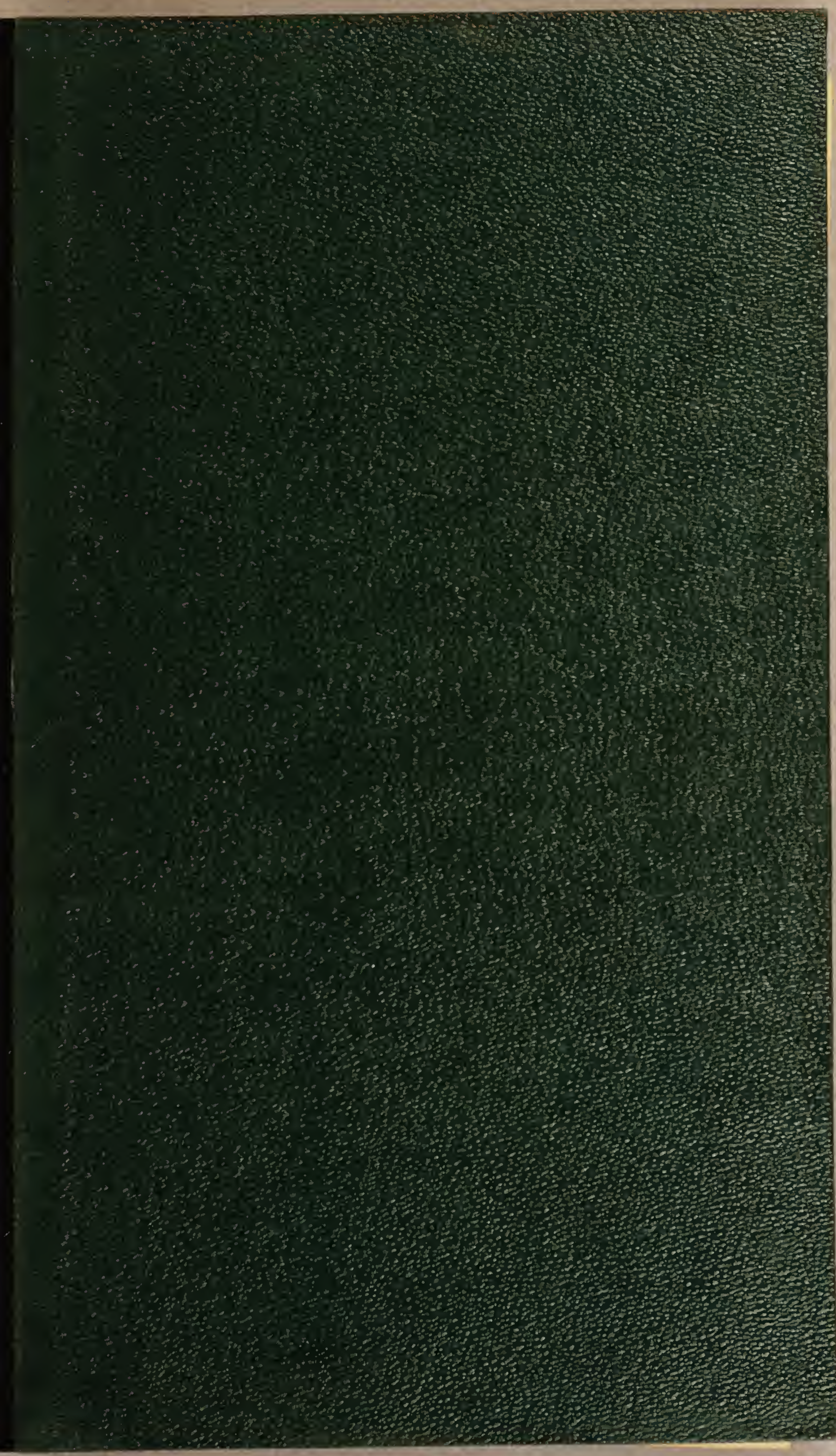

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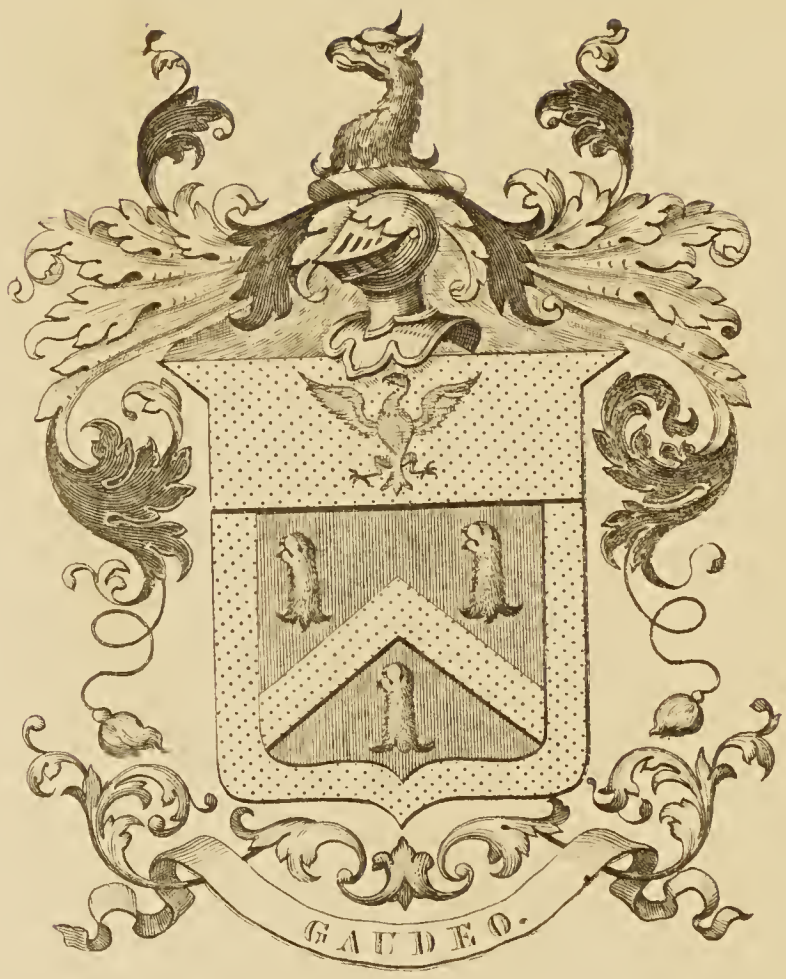

John Carter Brown.

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THE TRUE

Conſtitutional Means

For putting an End to the

DISPUTES

BETWEEN

GREAT-BRITAIN

AND THE

AMERICAN COLONIES.

Hoc enim ſpectant leges, hoc volunt, incolumem eſſe civium conjunctionem.

CIC. DE OFF.

LONDON,
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT in the Strand.

M DCC LXIX.

but no perſon having yet attempted to remove the ſecond cauſe, I beg leave to propoſe ſuch a conſtitutional ſyſtem of taxation for America, for the ſupport of the defenſive force of the ſtate, as could never be attended with oppreſſion, and conſequently ought to meet with no oppoſition from the Americans. Beſides the two principal cauſes of diſcontent above mentioned, the coloniſts have urged ſome others, which, however, may be included under the preceding heads, ſuch as their poverty and inability, and the great impropriety of taxes being laid on people at three thouſand miles diſtance, by thoſe who are unacquainted with their condition and circumſtances; but all theſe pleas are obviated by the ſyſtem I ſhall propoſe; and, indeed, when they are fully examined into and explained, are far from being ſo concluſive as at firſt ſight they appear to be.

By the nature of all government, the defence of the ſtate is the firſt concern; and the coloniſts cannot deny but that they are equally bound with the ſubjects in Great-Britain, to contribute their propor-

tional

tional ſhare to the ſupport of that defence. But who is it that compoſe the ſtate? It is certainly, with propriety, only the families of freeholders or landholders, who have a poſſeſſion that cannot be removed, and upon which they depend for their ſubſiſtence either in whole or in part. All others who earn their ſubſiſtence by the ingenuity of their mind, or the labour of their body, and who could, by the ſame means, procure a livelihood any where, cannot ſo properly be called upon to defend what they do not poſſeſs, namely, land-territory, which is uſually what enemies or invaders attack, and want by conqueſt to ſecure to themſelves. As theſe laſt, however, while they continue ſubjects of any ſtate, enjoy the protection of its laws, they are therefore alſo required on ſome occaſions to give their aſſiſtance againſt a foreign enemy. But the hiſtory of all ages plainly ſhews us, that the beſt regulated commonwealths have ever put the chief defence of the ſtate upon the poſſeſſors of land; and indeed, it is againſt the fundamental principles of every ſtate, that the poſſeſſors of land ſhould be mere idlers, and diſtinguiſh

themſelves by no other ſervices to their country, than by ſpending their rents. It would ſurely be no very honourable privilege for them to claim to be entitled to do nothing.

Let us look into the Engliſh hiſtory, and we ſhall find that from the earlieſt times the Saxons laid the charge of defending the ſtate upon the landholders. That elegant and inſtructive hiſtorian, Lord Lyttelton, tells us, "That it was a fundamental law of the Anglo-Saxons, that "all the lands of the kingdom, even thoſe "which were held by eccleſiaſticks and "women, were ſubject to three public "duties, the building and repairing of "forts and caſtles, the building and repairing of bridges, and military ſervice "for the defence of the realm." Upon the Norman conqueſt the military police was ſomewhat altered; but ſtill the burden of defending the ſtate remained with the landholders. The proprietors of the lands in England, we are told by the ſame noble author, then held their eſtates by knights-ſervice or military tenures; and this eſta-

bliſhment

bliſhment remained much the ſame from the reign of William the Conqueror, to that of Charles II. when wards and liveries, which were part of the burdens impoſed upon hereditary fiefs, were aboliſhed with thoſe fiefs, and the revenue of the exciſe ſubſtituted in their place. What a wide deviation was this from the antient, and I might have ſaid, from the fundamental laws of the kingdom; and how materially was the conſtitution altered by this new law? By the feudal ſyſtem, at its firſt origin, the land or fief was conferred with the obligation of performing military ſervice for the defence of the ſtate, in proportion to the extent of the fief, and notwithſtanding this burden, the grant was ſtiled *beneficium*, a kindneſs; and if the beneficiary neglected or refuſed to perform the ſervices required of him, he forfeited his territory, which was conferred upon another, who was willing to contribute his ſhare to the public defence. This was formerly the military ſyſtem adopted by freemen all over Europe, and of late we have ſeen a very prudent and politic nation again having recourſe to it, about the very time that we

were

were deviating from it. In the times of our anceſtors, thoſe that poſſeſſed the land, defended the ſtate; and by the preſent conſtitution of Sweden, thoſe that defend the ſtate poſſeſs the land; for about the end of the laſt century the military force of that kingdom was new modelled, and particular farms were allotted to both officers and men, which farms are always connected with the commiſſions and military oath. As the maxims of liberty are no where better underſtood than in our own nation, we ourſelves appear quickly to have been convinced of the impropriety of exempting the poſſeſſors of land from the ſupport of the military force of the ſtate, and at the Revolution a land-tax was inſtituted, which has continued at different rates ever ſince.

By the act for aboliſhing military tenures, the landed gentlemen are generally ſuppoſed only to have freed themſelves of the expence of wards and liveries; but it ought to be conſidered, that they were by the ſame act exempted from perſonal military ſervice, which was on many occaſions very charge-

chargeable, and joined with the former, made a fixed and perpetual burden upon their eſtates, which at ſome periods exceeded ſix, or eight, or ten ſhillings in the pound. The charge was certainly immenſe; for at the Conqueſt the landholders of England, who held by military tenures, were obliged to maintain 60000 knights or horſemen, independent of the expence of wards and liveries, which laſt they agreed to on condition of their military tenures being made hereditary. The force thus maintained was found in after-ages to be inactive and unſerviceable, unleſs by an extraordinary exertion of expence, and by throwing the whole kingdom into commotion; and as the military art improved, experience ſhewed, that a much ſmaller force, well diſciplined, could render more effectual ſervice, either offenſively or defenſively, than that great body of undiſciplined militia, which was ſo very burdenſome to the kingdom. The noble hiſtorian, above mentioned, juſtly remarks, "That the military tenures wanted that "force of *union* in which conſiſts all the "energy of monarchical ſtates; and that

"they

" they were not adapted to procure that " *tranquillity*, which is the principal benefit " derived to mankind from order and go- " vernment, and without which no im- " provement of civil ſociety can be ad- " vanced or ſupported."

Theſe were certainly the chief reaſons which induced the legiſlature to aboliſh them; but the ſuppreſſion of thoſe tenures by no means implied, that the nation was to remain without defence, or that the proprietors of land ſhould not contribute to that defence, or rather, ſhould not ſtill continue to be the chief defenders. From the moſt early periods of our hiſtory to the ſuppreſſion of the military tenures, it appears that the nation, even in time of peace, always had a ſtanding military defence, which was not a little burdenſome to it; but inſtead of that burdenſome militia, the legiſlature of late years have committed the defence of the ſtate in part to a regular diſciplined army, conſiſting of natives, and kept embodied from year to year. The diſcipline of that ſmall body of men being more exact than that of troops who

are ſeldom or ever embodied, they thereby become more formidable to a foreign enemy, than three times their numbers would otherwiſe be; and in caſe of an actual war, can eaſily communicate their diſcipline to new levies, who quickly become fit for actual ſervice. This ſmall body of regular troops affords leiſure to all the reſt of the kingdom to purſue their civil employments unmoleſted, and in perfect *tranquillity*, ſo that the time which was formerly conſumed in *neceſſary weapon ſhewing*, may now be employed in cultivating the ſciences, in advancing agriculture or improving manufactures, and increaſing the ſtock of them. This *ſtanding army*, while it conſiſts of natives, and is commanded by officers of great land-property, has no more reſemblance to a *mercenary army*, than the preſent militia of Sweden, or of the Swiſs Cantons, has to the Turkiſh Janiſſaries; and we have as little reaſon of apprehenſion of danger to our liberties from ſuch an army as the Swiſs or Swedes have from theirs.

I am inclined to believe, that the profeſſion of a ſoldier is therefore honourable, be-

cauſe it implies that the officer is a man of an independent fortune, not that he is a man of ſuperior courage; for many who reſpect the officer, are conſcious that they themſelves would be no way inferior to him in courage; but all the world ſighing for independence, the officer is regarded as a man in that ſituation, and a degree of ſuperiority is therefore attributed to him. It is certainly moſt agreeable to our conſtitution, that the poſſeſſors of the land ſhould be the defenders of the ſtate, in which caſe they might be conſtitutional ſoldiers, and diſciplined ſoldiers at the ſame time; but it has been rather too much the practice in this country, for the younger brothers to preſs into the ſervice by threes and fours, while the eldeſt brothers remained upon the ſoil to breed, and be fox-hunters, where many of them, who cultivated nothing but hard drinking, became rude, violent, unſociable, ignorant, headſtrong and capricious. But excluſive of the younger brothers of landed gentlemen, who from their family connections may ſafely be entruſted with the arms of the ſtate, have we not ſeen many of vulgar education, and of very low

profeſſions, making a pecuniary traffic of commiſſions, and purchaſing into the ſervice, merely to get a good annuity for their money? Yet theſe laſt are now complaining that their half-pay will not afford to maintain them like *gentlemen*, that is, as they interpret it, like *idlers*, when, by their birth and education, they were not entitled to live in ſuch a manner. Were there not many other profeſſions open for them, which if purſued with diligence and induſtry, would have afforded them a better ſubſiſtence than their half-pay? If therefore a livelihood was what they chiefly wanted, and chiefly ſought for, they ought to have choſen ſome other employment than that of arms. Suppoſing all our military officers proprietors of land, which their office and the nature of our conſtitution ſeem to require them to be, in that caſe, when they quitted the ſervice, they would have their eſtates to retire to, and probably would not be very clamorous for an augmentation of half-pay. A preference to a life of eaſe, and an attention to provide heirs for their family, have, perhaps, induced many of them to reſign the noble

office of defending the ſtate to others who were not ſo conſtitutionally entitled to it; yet of late we have ſeen ſome of our moſt antient and moſt illuſtrious families not ſpare themſelves in hazardous times. The preſent Duke of Grafton was left a minor by the death of his father in the ſervice of his country in the Weſt-Indies. Lord Percy, almoſt the only branch of an illuſtrious houſe, expoſed himſelf to the fatigues and dangers of ſeveral campaigns in Germany under Prince Ferdinand. Lord Shelburne, though he had no heirs of his own body, hazarded his life ſeveral years under the ſame leader. Were other gentlemen of rank and fortune to imitate thoſe examples, the army would certainly be more reſpectable and more conſtitutional, than when commanded by officers, whoſe chief ſubſiſtence is their pay. If the ſword is put into the hands of men of great landed property, their being ſubject to military ſubordination, impoſed by act of parliament, ſerves only to render them a body more compact, but can never inſpire them with the deſire of reſigning their liberties and properties, which they held in common

with

with their fellow-ſubjects, and which are a prize more conſiderable than any that could be offered them by a prince who meant to enſlave them.

Since the concluſion of the late peace, the adminiſtration have thought proper to ſtation part of the army on the continent of North-America; not for the ſole purpoſe of defending the coloniſts againſt the Indians, but as quarters for the troops, and that they may be more conveniently aſſembled in caſe of an attack in thoſe parts from an European invader. As the coloniſts on that continent form part of the Britiſh ſtate, nothing could be more reaſonable than to expect that they ſhould contribute to the ſupport of thoſe troops, according to their ability; but the Americans, falſely deeming themſelves exempt from national burdens, or ſetting themſelves up as judges of the expediency of maintaining regular forces, made a difficulty of even ſupplying them with ſalt, candles, and ſmall-beer, or what is equivalent to ſmall-beer. They have ſince complained grievouſly of oppreſſion, on account

of

of the taxes lately impoſed upon them by the Britiſh legiſlature; and as ſome of thoſe taxes have been taken off, from a notion of their being burdenſome, and others ſtand juſtly charged with being impolitic, and prejudicial to the ſale of Britiſh manufactures, I beg leave to propoſe another kind of tax for the coloniſts, which would always lay the burden upon them in the ſame proportion as it was impoſed in Great-Britain. The tax I would propoſe is, *a tax upon all the lands poſſeſſed by Britiſh ſubjects in America*, ad valorem *of their rents, to be for ever rated by the impoſition of the land-tax in Great-Britain; ſo that the ſame act which impoſes the one, ſhould impoſe the other, always in the ſame degree.*

In every ſtate the directive influence is confined to one part, and cannot, conſiſtently with the public ſafety, be in different parts at the ſame time; and every Britiſh ſubject muſt acknowledge, that the directive influence of the Britiſh ſtate remains with the Britiſh legiſlature, who are the only proper judges of what concerns the general welfare of the whole empire. It

becomes

becomes every county therefore, and every province, to ſubmit to the burdens impoſed upon them in common with their fellow-ſubjects for the defence of the ſtate, when it appears that thoſe burdens are impoſed, not partially, but in a juſt and equal proportion. But the land-tax which I have propoſed, is in its very nature unoppreſſive, and is equally well ſuited to the pooreſt, as to the richeſt province of the Britiſh empire; for, ſuppoſing the rents of the lands near the capital to be five pounds an acre, in other places five ſhillings, and in others five pence; it is demonſtrably plain, that a tax of a fifth or a tenth upon the loweſt ſum, is not more burdenſome than a tax of the ſame rate upon the higheſt ſum. A fifth of the loweſt would be a penny, while a fifth of the higheſt would be a pound. By the very nature of government, the legiſlature of Great-Britain is the ſole judge of the *neceſſity* of impoſing taxes for the defence of the ſtate; and by purſuing the plan I have propoſed, it is plain they could not err in judging of the *ability* of thoſe who were to pay them. From him who poſſeſſed little, little would be required, while the

rich

rich would pay largely in proportion to his riches; and whatever burdens the Britiſh legiſlature laid upon the coloniſts by this tax, they would, at the ſame time, lay proportionally upon the ſubjects in Great-Britain.

By the plan of taxation above propoſed, it is plain that the Americans could have no reaſon to complain of being expoſed to a diſproportionate tax. But we have been told, that it is impoſſible they ſhould be able to pay any taxes at all, as they have no gold and ſilver among them. To this I anſwer, that though taxes are beſt paid by money, yet they are not raiſed upon money, but upon produce and manufactures; and that North-America, though without ſilver and gold, is a very rich country, is demonſtrably evident from this, that it doubles its number of inhabitants every twenty-five or thirty years, which no ſtate could do, were it in miſery and want. The coloniſts, ſo far from being in that ſituation, muſt poſſeſs a luxuriant abundance to be able to double their inhabitants in ſo ſhort a ſpace; and is it at all unreaſonable to require a part of this

this luxuriant abundance to be paid as taxes to ſupport the general eſtabliſhment of the military and naval defence of the whole empire, leaving the internal wants of each colony, ſo far as they relate to civil and œconomical purpoſes, to be ſupplied by the prudence of each particular legiſlature?

The want of gold and ſilver might be moſt eaſily ſupplied by a juſtly regulated paper currency; and it appears to be the groſſeſt ſoleciſm in politicks that has ever been committed in regard to the colonies, to deprive them of that medium of commerce. To have a vent for induſtry, quickens induſtry; but if the daily minute tranſactions of domeſtic commerce are to be reduced to bartering or credit, all buſineſs will quickly languiſh; and as taxes are but another kind of permutation, in which a part of one's ſubſtance is granted for protection promiſed, this laſt circulation for want of a medium is totally obſtructed, unleſs we revert to the old method of levying taxes in kind. One nation may trade very largely with another without the intervention of any money at all, as bills of

exchange may be made to balance bills of exchange; but the moment any province is deprived of a medium for the daily exchanges of ſhopkeepers, market-people, manufacturers, victuallers, &c. it were vain to expect the payment of taxes, or of any thing elſe, but with the utmoſt difficulty. Though the colonies ſhould have no other medium of commerce but paper, that does not at all imply that the taxes raiſed could not be convertible into ſterling money, while there is an open and extenſive trade between them and the mother-country. Swift, who, though an excellent party-writer, was but a ſhallow and lame politician, puzzles himſelf prodigiouſly to account for Ireland's paying annually to Great-Britain a million ſterling, while her whole currency in gold and ſilver amounted only to about 600,000 *l.* After ſome dark and perplexed reaſoning, he roundly concludes, that in a few years poor Ireland would not have a braſs farthing left; and having his mind poſſeſſed with this falſe idea, he often amuſes himſelf with painting the imaginary future diſtreſs of his country; whereas, the truth is, that ſince his time, the induſtry,

duſtry, wealth, opulence, and trade of Ireland have been progreſſively augmenting; and there is the greateſt proſpect of the continuance and increaſe of its proſperity. If Swift had examined the writers on trade for information in this point, he would have obtained no ſatisfaction from them; for they ſeem never to have carried their ideas beyond a mercantile balance; but if he had conſidered facts with attention, he might have perceived, that though England receives a million a year, Ireland does not pay that million in money, but in money's worth; and he might alſo have ſeen to a demonſtration, what indeed is a new doctrine, that a nation may proſper and become opulent, with the balance of trade annually againſt her, which in truth is always the caſe with almoſt every diſtant province in regard to the capital. If Ireland by means of her trade can pay ſo large a balance to Great-Britain annually, without any encroachment upon her ſtock of money, ſo alſo could America, whether her money were gold and ſilver, or paper only. And as every one allows, that the abundance of any kind of money that has a free currency,

quickens and promotes induſtry as much as the abundance of ſap promotes vegetation, why ſhould we expoſe the induſtry of the coloniſts to a kind of artificial froſt, which is prejudicial both to them and us? If the abundance of paper currency be carried to an exceſs, it will firſt of all hurt the province where it is iſſued, and their own feelings will direct them, better than any general law, where, and in what manner, to apply the remedy. To prohibit them from artificial money, from an apprehenſion of their taking too much of it, ſeems equally politic and prudent, as to preſcribe to them by act of parliament the quantity of meat and drink they ſhould take, from a ſuſpicion leſt they ſhould eat to a ſurfeit. The very tranſgreſſion would lead to moderation; and if it plainly appeared that they grew plump and fat by feeding upon the bark of their trees, why ſhould we condemn that kind of food, if they found it to their own liking? In the opinion of the ingenious Sir William Petty, "It is a great error in politicks to "lay too great a ſtreſs upon the matter of "money, which is to the whole effects of "the kingdom but as 1 to 111;" that is,

makes but 112th part of the riches of a ſtate. Should this 112th part then be wholly artificial, where is the mighty damage, while it ſerves as a means of augmenting the general ſtock of wealth, and of enabling the inhabitants to improve their plantations, inſtead of conſuming their capitals by ruinous credit? It is the true ſpirit of Lombard-ſtreet and 'Change-alley to reſolve all power into the poſſeſſion of gold and ſilver; but however that maxim may have predominated in times paſt, the beſt acquainted with the ſubjects of trade and finances ſeem now to be convinced, both from reaſon and experience, that it is induſtry which purchaſes induſtry; and that a defect in national induſtry is by no means compenſated by a large ſtock of gold and ſilver. It may therefore be preſumed that the coloniſts will ſoon be eaſed of the intolerable grievance of the ſuppreſſion of paper currency, which is directly contrary to the general practice of the moſt commercial ſtate in the univerſe; I mean Holland; and muſt diſtreſs them as much in their common dealings, as if their bridges were all broke down, and they ſhould be denied the uſe of ferries.

On

On the ſuppoſition that a free courſe will ſoon again be opened for induſtry on the continent of America, by allowing the inhabitants to uſe what medium of commerce they find moſt convenient, I ſhall lay before my readers a few particulars, from which ſome judgement may be formed of the wealth and opulence of the American coloniſts. Setting aſide the two Floridas, Georgia, and Nova-Scotia, it will be generally allowed that Canada is the pooreſt of our continental colonies, and ſurely not one of them was nearly ſo much haraſſed and exhauſted by the late war as Canada was before it ſubmitted to the arms of Great-Britain. Is not the climate of Canada likewiſe, when compared to that of the other colonies, the moſt unfavourable for ſpeedily recruiting its loſſes? yet Canada, as appears by the Cuſtom-houſe books, notwithſtanding its late ſufferings, takes, of Britiſh commodities, to the value of upwards of 300,000 l. in one year. How flouriſhing therefore may we not conclude it to have been before the late war, which brought ſo many calamities upon it! But even then, according to the account of

Charlevoix,

Charlevoix, it would not bear a compariſon in point of wealth with the Engliſh colonies next adjoining to it. " In New " France, or Canada, he tells us, (Vol. V. " edit. 1744) no rich people are to be " ſeen. In New England, and the other " provinces on the continent of America " belonging to the Britiſh empire, an uni- " verſal opulence prevails, which the inha- " bitants ſeem not to know how to enjoy; " and in New France, a general poverty " concealed under the air of eaſy circum- " ſtances, which ſeems not at all ſtudied or " affected. The Engliſh coloniſt heaps up " wealth, and avoids all unneceſſary ex- " pence; the French coloniſt enjoys what " he has, and often makes a parade of what " he has not."

New England, by the French author's account, was then vaſtly ſuperior in wealth to Canada; and of late that colony ſeems to have been ſo gorged with money, as actually to have complained of having too much of it, which I believe no ſtate ever did before. This appears from the following extract from the ſpeech of the governor of Maſſachuſets Bay, to the aſſembly of that province, upon the

the notification of the late peace. " It will " now be neceſſary, he ſays, not only to avail " yourſelves of every poſſible improvement in " agriculture, fiſhery, and trade, but alſo to " revive and promote a ſpirit of induſtry, fru- " gality and œconomy, *all of which* have of " late been but too much relaxed *by an unu-* " *ſual flow of money*, much exceeding what " would naturally ariſe from the produce and " manufactures of the country." This declaration of the legiſlature, as it may be juſtly called, ſhews the good ſenſe of that colony, who ſeem to be fully convinced that national riches flow from ſomething elſe than a redundancy of money, which naturally tends to increaſe the number of idlers, and conſequently to leſſen the annual ſtock of induſtry, or, in other words, the annual income of the ſtate. Yet as this ſuperabundant money, which they complain of, did not make its firſt appearance among them for nothing, it is a proof that the balance of trade had been, during the war, very largely in their favour, or that of late they had had a much more extenſive ſale for their produce than uſual; for when it is declared, *that the flow of money is more than what would*

would naturally ariſe from the produce and manufactures of the country, it can hardly mean any thing elſe than that the common and uſual conſumption of the produce and manufactures of the country was greatly increaſed. The war then it would ſeem, inſtead of exhauſting them, had conſiderably bettered their circumſtances; and all money, whether real or nominal, upon its firſt circulation, has the good effect of quickening and enlarging commerce, though ſoon after a redundancy of it may promote idleneſs and a relaxation of induſtry. This laſt effect the colony ſeem, with great prudence, to have been watchful againſt; and no doubt but from this early warning, great part of the redundant money was applied to the improvement of agriculture, fiſhery and trade, which cannot fail of having augmented the wealth and opulence of the colony.

But all the riches of the coloniſts are not centered in Maſſachuſets Bay. In ſome other colonies there are neither cottagers, common beggars, nor pariſh poor; the free inhabitants being all included under three

claſſes, *gentlemen*, *traders*, and *good livers*; the latter cultivating a ſmall eſtate of their own, with their own hands, and the aſſiſtance of three or four negroes, and the former, owners of a large territory, with three or four or five hundred negroes. Such poſſeſſors cannot certainly be deemed indigent; and how greatly would the burdens of the inhabitants of this iſland be lightened, were there no pariſh-poor nor common beggars to be found in Great-Britain. The produce of the planters purchaſes for them what others buy with gold and ſilver; but even ſeveral of the coloniſts of the rank of *good livers* have often been ſeen to pay the price of a negro with gold. As inſtances of Virginian luxury, I have been aſſured, that there are few families there without ſome plate; and that at ſome entertainments, the attendants have appeared almoſt as numerous as the gueſts.

But we may form a judgement of the general wealth of the colonies from their importations, which from Great-Britain alone, by their own account, amount to full three millions *per annum*. If we add another

million for their importations from the Weſt-Indies, and other places, it cannot be deemed exorbitant, conſidering their traffic with the French ſugar-iſlands, as well as with our own, and this will make the whole of their importations four millions *per annum*. But they do not import their corn, their firing, their beef and mutton, their fiſh, their poultry, their milk, their butter, with many other articles of daily ſubſiſtence, which in every ſtate, and in every nation, make by far the greateſt part of the general conſumption. Beſides, there is a great deal of houſhold induſtry among them; ſo that a conſiderable part of the manufactures which they wear are made by themſelves; and this, added to the expence of their ſubſiſtence, muſt at leaſt be double the value of all their importations. On this very moderate computation, the value of their whole annual conſumption will amount to twelve millions ſterling, which is one ninth part of the conſumption of the inhabitants of Great-Britain, who pay above thirteen millions ſterling taxes every year, including turnpikes and the poor's rates, two articles which the coloniſts are exempted from.

I reckon the computation moderate, when I ſuppoſe their general conſumption but three times the value of their imports; for the diſproportion is much greater in every nation. In Great-Britain, the value of the importations, which is one year with another about twelve millions ſterling, hardly makes a ninth part of the general conſumption; and probably the imports of the colonies hardly make a fourth of their general conſumption; ſo that it would be no over eſtimation to ſtate this laſt at ſixteen millions ſterling; but we ſhall ſuppoſe it only to amount to twelve millions. This laſt ſum ſurely is a ſtock upon which ſome taxes may be raiſed for the general defence of the ſtate, independent of the particular wants of each colony; and can any tax be named which can be ſo proportionably rated as the land-tax? for though all pay by the ſame law, yet none can be required to pay beyond his ability; and the fund from whence the tax is raiſed, is, in the colonies that are leaſt inhabited, juſt as able to bear the burden impoſed, as in the moſt populous county of Great-Britain.

But

But the coloniſts complain of the high price they pay for Britiſh manufactures; and ſome have urged that increaſed price as an equivalent for all other public burdens: that is, they would be content to take land from us gratuitouſly, but think it a grievance to be confined to take from Great-Britain the manufactures which they do not make themſelves. If the Britiſh manufactures are to them ſomewhat dearer than to the people of Great-Britain, they ought to conſider that they have land much cheaper, moſtly, in climates where vegetation is twice as ſtrong as in Great-Britain. The land taken up in America already more than exceeds the extent of both Great-Britain and Ireland, and fewer than 100,000 freeholders poſſeſs all this extent among them, generally by the bounty of the crown, the greateſt number having paid no pecuniary equivalent for them. The lands in Great-Britain and Ireland, on the other hand, are divided among a million of freeholders, moſt of whom have given a very high equivalent for them; an equivalent which would have procured them land any where on the ſurface of the globe. Beſides, moſt of the

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lands in Great-Britain and Ireland are rented, and the rent is generally ſuppoſed one third of the produce, which is a tax of 33 *per cent.* paid by the farmer for leave to cultivate the ground, and renders proviſions 33 *per cent.* dearer to the inhabitants than they would otherwiſe be. In America, on the other hand, there are very few leaſes; the farmer and proprietor are generally the ſame perſon, conſequently he can afford to ſell his produce cheaper, than he who is obliged to give away one third of it; and this added to the fertility of the ſoil, and the original cheapneſs of the land, ought to render the expence of ſubſiſtence a mere trifle in America. The rental of the lands of Great-Britain and Ireland amounts to about 22 millions; but the rental of the ſame extent of lands in America is not probably one million ſterling. Do not the people in Great-Britain and Ireland then lie under as many difficulties in the purchaſe of proviſions, as the Americans in the purchaſe of manufactures; and which country flouriſhes moſt, or is thriving faſteſt? The difficulty of procuring proviſions in Great-Britain is ſo great (that is, the expence

pence of living is ſo high) that the iſland is crowded with old batchelors and old maids, from whence it happens, that in the ſpace of thirty years, millions have been prevented from being born; and its proſperity is in a manner at a ſtand. The Americans on the other hand, in the ſame ſpace of time, have doubled their number of inhabitants by procreation alone; which is certainly not owing to any particular fecundity in the females, but to the great eaſineſs of procuring a ſubſiſtence, which is an inducement to the eſtabliſhment of new families. If the Americans then would judge with candour, they would readily acknowledge that their brethren on this ſide the Atlantic lie under much more preſſing burdens than themſelves; and dropping their plea of inability, would chearfully contribute their ſhare to the public charges of the ſtate. Were but harmony and good correſpondence firmly eſtabliſhed between European and American Britons, it would require no great depth of penetration to foretel that in a few years the burdens of both would be diminiſhed, that manufactures would ſoon be bought cheaper by the latter, and

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proviſions be eaſier to be purchaſed by the former. Join the induſtry and products of both together, they will even at preſent be found to make a ſtock equal to that of any European nation whatever; and as there is ſuch room for improvements, not only on the continent of America, but alſo in the ſugar-iſlands, and ſuch an ardour for making new ſettlements in both, what may we not expect from a few years of peace? A true family compact among Britons would ſoon overbalance, and keep in check, any ambitious family compact in Europe, and at the ſame time would add ſo conſiderably to the wealth of the Britiſh empire in every part, that the public revenues would increaſe, while the ſhare paid by individuals would be leſſened.

But how can the coloniſts of North America thrive while they have no manufactures among them? I anſwer, that they have hitherto thriven ſo aſtoniſhingly by avoiding manufactures, and that if they would wiſh not to check their preſent proſperity, they ought carefully to ſhun manufactures, till their great population forces

forces them upon them. In a thin peopled country, the greateſt of all profits are made by cultivating an improvable fund, where nature co-operates with the induſtry of man, and, by her never-ceaſing influence, augments his riches even while he ſleeps. I beg to know if the returns of any traffic on earth ever produced ſo many *per cent.* as the returns of agriculture in a fertile ſoil, and favourable climate. Iſaac reaped an hundred fold, which is nine thouſand nine hundred *per cent.* or a profit equivalent to near five pounds produced from one ſhilling. Has ſuch a number of fortunes been raiſed in Great-Britain by manufactures, or in Holland by merchandiſing, within theſe hundred years paſt, as have been raiſed in North America by plantations, improvement of lands, and new ſettlements? For one perſon that has riſen to opulence by manufactures, there are ten planters who have, from almoſt nothing, acquired not only independence, but lordly poſſeſſions, or what at leaſt will become lordly poſſeſſions to their ſons or grandſons; and as there is ſtill room for others to purſue the ſame means of raiſing their fortunes, and aug-

menting, at the ſame time, the capital fund of the colonies; would it not be the height of imprudence in them to purſue a plan of induſtry that was leſs lucrative? It may, I think, ſafely be concluded, that the riches of the coloniſts would not increaſe ſo faſt, were the inhabitants to leave off enlarging their ſettlements and plantations, and run eagerly upon manufactures; that is to ſay, ſuppoſing the number of Britiſh ſubjects on the continent of North America to be two millions, thoſe two millions, in the way they are in at preſent, produce a greater annual amount of induſtry, than if one half of them, or two thirds of them, were artiſans. Sir William Petty, notwithſtanding his uſual accuracy, is certainly in an error, when he ſays, that becauſe the daily wages of a country labourer is leſs than that of an artiſan or ſailor, therefore his induſtry is leſs valuable to the ſtate. By the ſame reaſoning, the induſtry of a negro in the Weſt-Indies, who receives no wages, is of no value. The wages of country labourers, 'tis true, are lower than thoſe of artificers, but the ſuperlucration ariſing from their induſtry to the ſtate is much greater

greater than from any other claſs of workmen. Twenty ſervants will manage a farm of 400 l. a year, which may be reckoned of 1000 l. a year value to the ſtate, as that counts upon the whole produce, and not upon the rent only; therefore the induſtry of each of thoſe ſervants is worth 50 l. tho' he himſelf may receive but 20 l. and this induſtry does not, like that of the manufacturer, ariſe from a fund paid by other people, but is actually ſo much created, which, to us, had not exiſtence before. If a manufacturer earns two ſhillings a day, from whence does he draw that two ſhillings but out of the pocket of another, who gives him a full equivalent for the piece of manufacture he receives? ſo that there is only an exchange of wealth, but no augmentation: but a country labourer, who earns a ſhilling a day, draws that ſhilling, and perhaps two more for his maſter, out of the boſom of the earth, ſo that by him the national wealth is augmented three ſhillings a day. If agriculture, in a fruitful ſoil and thinly peopled country, be really found to afford a greater ſuperlucration to a ſtate than any manufacture, it

would ſeem a great impolicy in ſuch a county, to neglect to extend new ſettlements, while they can be extended to advantage. The inhabitants of crowded cities are compelled, in a manner, to prey on each other, and notwithſtanding their boaſted induſtry and perpetual toiling, what numbers of them are involved in miſery? which is a diſtemper that ſooner or later kills the patient, or, at leaſt, totally incapacitates him from keeping up or increaſing the population of the ſtate. The inhabiants of the country on the other hand, living in a favourable climate, having no rents to pay, and free from the luxurious wants of cities, ſeem to be placed out of the reach of poverty. With half the exertion of induſtry of the manufacturer, the planter can breed up a family ten times as numerous as his, and at the ſame time has the ſweet ſatisfaction of feeling himſelf in that independent ſituation, which the manufacturer hardly ever attains to. Upon his death, his family have ſtill the ſame ſtock of ſubſiſtence as before, and his loſs is ſoon more than ſupplied to the ſtate by new births; but upon the death of the artiſan, how of-

ten is his whole family deprived of bread? in conſequence of which part of it periſhes, or is thrown upon the public for a maintenance. He that ſhould lay out his money at compound intereſt, would ſurely provide better for the welfare of his poſterity, than he who lays out all his ſtock in purchaſing a life annuity. But how often may manufacturers be compared to the latter? while provident planters bear a ſtrong reſemblance to the former, not only in regard to their poſterity, but in regard to the ſtate. If therefore that legiſlature which ſuperintends the whole, and muſt in the nature of things ſuperintend the whole, undertakes to ſecure the planter in the quiet poſſeſſion of his eſtate, is it at all oppreſſive to require of him to allot a part of the annual bounties of nature to the ſupport of the public defence, when no greater proportion is demanded of him, than is demanded of every other land proprietor? This appears to me the faireſt of all expedients for putting an end to the preſent diſputes about taxation

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tion betwixt Great-Britain and her colonies, to the contentment of both parties, and of eſtabliſhing ſuch an eternal bond of union among Britons as would be the admiration of all future ages.

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